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ABSTRACT

This manual is written for any library planning to introduce a new or replacement automated system. It focuses on planning for an integrated system that computerizes a multiplicity of library functions using one common database. This second edition contains a new section on the preparation of a technology strategic plan, a section on developing system specifications that focuses on the "networked" quality of today's systems, an expanded section on training for staff and the public, and an augmented section on standards that covers transaction formats, nonprint formats, telecommunications, and the transfer of information, as well as bibliographic and item records. The Introduction offers an analysis of how changes in technology are impacting today's library and users' expectations. Part 1, "Creating a Basic Technology Plan," describes how to develop a library profile in preparation for automation, explains how to assess and identify institutional needs and priorities, and shows how to go about writing a technology plan. A technology assessment worksheet is provided. Part 2, "Selecting and Implementing Systems," begins with a System Implementation Checklist. Chapters in this part discuss automation options, developing system specifications, and the process of selecting a system--from preparing the request for proposal through evaluating vendor proposals to making the final decision. Postselection matters--negotiating a contract with the vendor of choice, maintaining the system, and training are also covered. Special attention is paid to meeting system requirements and specifications. Part 3, "Planning System Databases," examines the steps involved in creating and maintaining the "heart" of any system: the library's machine-readable databases. Chapters cover retrospective conversion, maintaining the bibliographic database, weeding, bar coding, and MARC. The final chapter in this part discusses standards in general and identifies specific ones that are crucial to the automation endeavor. The Conclusion offers comments on the life cycle of automated systems and on the benefits of good planning for improved library services. The Appendix considers the consultant relationship--finding, selecting, and working with one. (Author/AEF)